

Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)

Goal: Public Engagement/Science

Organizational Accomplishments: EDC has a long history of developing educational programs and campaigns for use outside of schools, employing an innovative array of media, technologies, and community partnerships. We operate on the principle that in order to reach diverse individuals and diverse communities, you need to be in venues and media they are likely to encounter—such as public television, libraries, museums, community technology centers, and other youth-serving organizations.

Purpose: In all of these programs, we communicate a vision of effective science education while also providing model activities that exemplify that vision. We seek to increase public understanding of: the value of scientific literacy; the relevance of science to daily life and careers; the kinds of activities that build both specific skills and deep understanding of core scientific ideas; and the goals and characteristics of effective science education

Activities and Results:

- *ScienceQuest* supports community-based organizations in running successful after-school science programs for youth between the ages of 10 and 14. Young people work in teams to develop and research a question about a personally relevant science topic, and design and construct Web sites to represent their knowledge.
- *Design It! Engineering in After-School Programs:* In collaboration with the National Institute of Out-of-School Time (NIOST), EDC works with six science centers around the country to introduce design-engineering activities into after-school programming.
- *Explore It!* fosters science learning through an out-of-school curriculum in which children explore familiar phenomena in an extended manner. These investigations provide a foundation for understanding concepts aligned with the national standards addressed in formal school curricula.
- *The Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology of Discovery: Unlocking the Secrets of Nubian Culture:* This project provides informal learning opportunities in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology, using the ancient African civilization of Nubia as the context. Components include a traveling museum exhibit, educational materials (hands-on kits, videos, and discussion guides), a Web site, a CD-ROM, community outreach, and professional development programs for educators in museums, community groups, schools, and libraries.
- *The YouthLearn Initiative at EDC* offers youth development professionals and educators working outside of schools with comprehensive services and resources for using technology to create exciting learning environments. The YouthLearn Guide and Web site provide a collection of project-based lessons and planning guides in various content areas, including research skills/reasoning, survey techniques, using technology, and science experiments.

Plans for next 12 months: All of these activities are ongoing. See www.edc.org for details.